1: Conzemius M-4, 5 (1921) 1932
SA15 Mosquito SA15

DELIVERY.—Only females are present at childbirth, the elder or more experienced ones acting as midwives. The methods employed to hasten delivery are in general very brutal, and they lead occasionally to the death of both mother and child. One of the befriended persons present severs the navel string with the aid of a sharpened piece of bamboo or a wood splinter, and then ties it with a cotton thread. In virtue of this act she will henceforth be considered as a blood relation to the newborn child and the latter's parents as well, and they call each other reciprocally *lapya* or *lahpya*. This corresponds loosely to the *compadre* and *comadre* system of the Ladinos. The *lapya* appears to have been limited in former days to the Miskito, but lately it has spread to the other tribes of the Mosquito Coast—Sumu, Rama, and Paya. The afterbirth is buried by one of the women as soon as it is expelled. The same is also done with the umbilical cord, in order to prevent pigs, dogs, or other animals from eating it up, which may result in sickness or death for the baby.

COUVADE.—Traces of the couvade may be observed among both Miskito and Sumu. During the first days of the newborn child the father will refrain from hard work and keep out of the bush. He will also abstain from certain foods and from salt and chili pepper. The mother also has to keep a diet. Exquemelin (Engl. edit.: 253) denies the existence of the couvade among the Miskito, but the actual facts have probably escaped his observation. This author states that the mother bathes her baby at the next river, wraps it up in a *calalas* (=*kwala* "cloth") and then follows her usual occupation. According to my various informants the bath of the mother and the child is postponed until the third day after delivery. But the mother is considered impure for from one to two weeks longer. After that period has elapsed she may return to her husband, who prepares a feast with food and drink in honor of the baby and the *lapya*.

BIRTHMARKS.—Birthmarks (M. and S.: *wasaki*) are ascribed by both tribes to the failure of the mother to obtain during pregnancy a certain article of food for which she had a vehement desire. The Indians supply, if possible, a woman *enciente* with any kind of food for which she may ask. If during that state she should have a craving for a slice of pineapple the husband will do his utmost to procure the fruit. Should the prospective mother learn that it is impossible to obtain it, and then thoughtlessly pass her hand over her head, breast, or arm, the child would be born in due time with the mark of a pineapple at the corresponding part of the body. A somewhat similar belief exists among the ignorant people in large areas in Europe.

A certain skin disease is found sometimes on the newly born child, and is known among the Miskito by the name *dus arbira* "gnawing of trees." Its origin is traced to the fact that the mother, while *enciente*,